

Message Text

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FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HUMMEL

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM USIS CANBERRA DATED JULY 30, 1976
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QUOTE

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SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION

SUMMARY: REVIEW OF AUSTRALIA PRESS COVERAGE OF FRASER'S VISIT
TO U.S. MAIN SUBJECTS COVERED IN REPORTING: (1) FORD'S POLITICAL
PREDICAMENT: (2) FRASER ATTEMPTS CONTACT WIDE SPECTRUM OF
POLITICIANS: (3) PRIME MINISTER'S VIEW OF DETENTE (4) NO
MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY SHIFT EXPECTED ON CARTER'S ELECTION:
(5) TRADE AND INVESTMENT: (6) INDIAN OCEAN
AND DETENTE. EDITS FROM AUSTRALIAN AND AGE EXCERPTED.

MEDIA COVERAGE OF FRASER'S VISIT TO U.S. EXTENSIVE. MAJOR
BROADCAST MEDIA CARRIED TAPED/FILMED REPORTS FROM WASHINGTON
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WHILE MAJOR NEWSPAPERS RAN STORY DAILY ALL WEEK, USUALLY

ON FRONT PAGE: PICTURES AND CARTOONS AS WELL.

FOLLOWING POINTS EMPHASIZED IN COVERAGE BY 'THE AGE', 'THE FINANCIAL REVIEW', 'THE AUSTRALIAN', AND 'THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD': (1) FORD'S POLITICAL PREDICAMENT. ALREADY SEEN AS LAME-DUCK PRESIDENT (AGE) WHO URGED FRASER'S VISIT THEN USED IT AS MEANS APPEAR "PRESIDENTIAL" ESPECIALLY WHEN APPEARING ON PRIME T.V. WITH CONNALLY. 'FINANCIAL REVIEW' SEES THIS AS ONE MORE INDICATION OF "RUTHLESSNESS" OF POLITICAL GAME AS PLAYED IN WASHINGTON. (2) FRASER'S CONTACTS WITH HIGH-RANKING OFFICIALS OF FORD ADMINISTRATION AS WELL AS MEETINGS WITH KENNEDY, CARTER STAFFERS - PEACOCK CREDITED WITH ARRANGING THESE MEETINGS. FRASER SEEN AS TRYING SWITCH IMAGE FROM IDENTIFICATION WITH REPUBLICANS TO ACCEPTANCE BY DEMOCRATS. (3) JOINT COMMUNIQUE ACCEPTANCE MAY SIGNAL SHIFT IN FRASER'S ANTI-SOVIET, ANTI-DETENTE STAND. FRASER NO LONGER SEEMS BELIEVE DETENTE A "DELUSION" BUT RATHER "SOMETHING ABOUT WHICH PEOPLE ARE DELUDED". SHIFT MORE APPARENT THAN REAL: FRASER STILL NOT THOUGH TO BELIEVE DETENTE "IMPERATIVE" WHILE KISSINGER DOES SO BELIEVE. (FIN REV.) (4) ALL PAPERS REPORTED ASSURANCES RECEIVED BY FRASEC IN TALKS WITH BRZEZINSKI THAT NO MAJOR SHIFTS IN FOREIGN POLICY WILL FOLLOW CARTER'S ELECTION. (5) 'SYDNEY MORNING HERALD': ONE MAJOR COMPONENT OF FRASER'S MESSAGE IS URGING EXPANSION OF TRADE RELATIONSHIP: FOREIGN INVESTMENT MOST WELCOME IF INVESTORS WILLING ACCEPT CANBERRA RULES. (6) INDIAN OCEAN AND DEFENSE: FRASER'S VIEW NOW THAT U.S. IS "RESOLUTE" SIGNALS SHIFT FROM POSITION IN PEKING LAST MONTH WHICH INDICATED LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN WESTERN DEFENSE. THIS SHIFT RESTS ON BELIEF THAT EXPANSION OF BASE ON DIEGO GARCIA WILL PROCEED. (7) 'THE AUSTRALIAN', JULY 28 EDITIONS LEAD EDITORIAL ENTITLED "DONG HOMEWORK IN WASHINGTON" EMPHASIZED BREADTH OF FRASER'S CONTACTS, WITH CREDIT TO PEACOCK FOR BRIDGE-BUILDING. "GOVERNMENT RIGHT PUT THIS DEGREE EMPHASIS ON UNDERSTANDING WITH CLOSEST ALLY. PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT WHEN AMERICAN POLICY BEING REORGANISED AFTER VIETNAM RETREAT INTO ISOLATIONISM, TO MAKE AN IMPACT ON WASHINGTON THINKING." BOTH DEMOS AND REPUBLICANS SEEN TAKING MORE POSITIVE VIEW POSSIBILITIES OPEN IN FOREIGN POLICY. FORD: ANOTHER ANGOLA WILL NOT BE TOLERATED: CARTER NO LONGER ADVOCATING

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CATING CUTS IN DEFENSE SPENDING EVEN ADMITTING CONSIDERATION OF NUCLEAR OPTION IN FACE ATTACK ON U.S. OR CLOSET ALLIES. "TOO MUCH OUGHT NOT BE MADE OF HAWKISH SOUND THIS LATEST STATEMENT. UNITED STATES ALWAYS HAD NUCLEAR OPTION TO CONSIDER IN CASE OF ATTACK ON ALLY...MR. CARTER REALLY EXPRESSING VIEW OF DETENTE HE HAS HELD FOR LONG TIME AND LARGELY SHARES WITH FRASER: THAT DETENTE DOES NOT ON ITS OWN ADD UP TO FOREIGN POLICY SECURITY, NEEDS BE BACKED BY REALISTIC DEFENSE CAPABILITY

BILITY.....NEW POINT WHICH DOES EMERGE FROM VARIOUS STATE-
MENTS OF AMERICAN POLITICIANS: WHOEVER WINS PRESIDENCY UNITED
STATES IN MOOD RESUME MORE ENERGETIC PLACE IN WORLD THAN OF
LATE. THIS COINCIDES CLOSELY WITH MR. FRASER'S HOPES. GROUND-
WORK HE AND PEACOCK NOW LAYING IN WASHINGTON SHOULD FORM
BASIS FOR CONSTRUCTIVE CO-OPERATION IN FUTURE BOTH POLITICALLY
AND ECONOMICALLY. ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION ONE OF PLANKS OF
CARTER'S FOREIGN POLICY IN PARTICULAR: FRASER'S PRIME
PURPOSES IN UNITED STATES TO PRESS HOME TO ALL AMERICANS
THAT WE REPRESENT NOT ONLY A SECURE ALLY IN PACIFIC, BUT
SOUND BUSINESS PARTNER.".

THE 'AGE' OF JULY 30 CARRIED EDIT QTE. FRASER VISIT
A SUCCESS, BUT.....EMDQUOTE.

QTE. IN EVERY SENSE EXCEPT ONE, PRIME MINISTER'S THREE-
DAY VISIT TO WASHINGTON A REMARKABLE SUCCESS.....
JOINT COMMUNIQUE ITSELF AN UNUSUAL SEAL ON SUCH A MEETING
GAVE FRASER DOCUMENTARY WITNESS TO ASSERTION THAT HIS
GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN ABLE RESTORE AUSTRALIAN-AMERICAN
RELATIONS TO THEIR FORMER CORDIALITY. CERTAINLY IT OFFERS
PRESIDENT'S ASSURANCES OF AMERICA'S CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR
ANZUS ALLIANCE, REGARDED BY SUCCESSIVE AUSTRALIAN GOVERN-
MENTS AS THE CORNERSTONE OF OUR SECURITY. OBVIOUS BUT IN-
ESCAPABLE DRAWBACK: MR. FRASER MEETING LAME-DUCK PRESIDENT
WHO COULD WELL BE, IF OPINION POLLS ARE RIGHT, DEAD DUCK
BY NOVEMBER. STILL, MR. FRASER HAS REASON BE PLEASED WITH
RAPPORT. ESTABLISHED WITH PRESENT ADMINISTRATION. HOWEVER,
DOCUMENT MOSTLY COUCHED IN GENERAL TERMS OF CORDIAL ACCORD
AND INCLUDES SUCH INNANE CLICHES AS INNERQTE IT WAS AGREED
THAT FURTHER PROGRESS IN THE TRADING RELATIONSHIP WOULD BE TO
THE ADVANTAGE OF EACH COUNTRY. ENDINNERQTE. ON SUCH ISSUES
AS DETENTE, INDIAN OCEAN, CAREFUL DIPLOMATIC LANGUAGE OF
COMMUNIQUE GIVES LITTLE INSIGHT INTO WHETHER VIEWS OF TWO
LEADERS WERE BROUGHT CLOSER THAN FRASER'S EARLIER ATTITUDES
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AND PRONOUNCEMENTS SUGGESTED. HOWEVER, REFERENCE TO PURSUIT
OF PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH, PRESIDENT FORD'S EUPHEMISM
FOR DETENTE, AND PRIME MINISTER'S INNERQTE OFF-THE-
RECORD ENDINNERQTE COMMENTS SUGGEST FRASER'S DOUBTS MAY
HAVE BEEN PARTLY RESOLVED. ON INDIAN OCEAN, FRASER WON
UNITED STATES AGREEMENT ON STRATEGIC AND POLITICAL IMPORT-
ANCE THIS AREA AND VALUE OF DEVELOPING FACILITIES AT DIEGO
GARCIA. UNCERTAINTY HANGING OVER AUSTRALIAN -AMERICAN
RELATIONS IS OUTCOME OF PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. NO DOUBT
RELATIONSHIP WILL REMAIN CLOSE AND FRIENDLY, BUT THE DEOMO-
CRATIC COMMITMENT TO CUT DEFENCE SPENDING AND REDUCE AMERICA'S
MILITARY PRESENCE OVERSEAS COULD UNDERMINE
REAT POWER
BALANCE ON WHICH MR. FRASER SETS SUCH HIGH STORE. THE
PRIME MINISTER CAN BUT VISIT AND SEE. MOUNT UNQUOTE

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